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This speech gives advice on eliciting annual donations to small colleges. The annual campaign or capital campaign is suggested to be the most challenging, all-embracing, pervasive, and exhausting program in fund raising. Campaign success is defined and elements of the annual campaign that help insure success are discussed. (TT)

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HOW TO IMPLEMENT ANNUAL GIVING FOR THE SMALL COLLEGE

Philosophy -- Dynamics

Presented By
Dr. Lowell H. Brammer
August 7, 1968

The "Annual Fund," as it has become known within the short period of a decade -- and that is indeed a short time in the history of philanthropy -- is the most challenging, all-embracing, and pervasive program in fund raising! And to this list of adjectives add one more characteristic, it is also the most exhausting -- as well as exhaustive -- program we can talk about.

Now, let us give some thought to each of these adjectives because these are simple terms on the surface that carry considerable inner meaning, once we get into this subject. Before I begin defending this position, I want to remind you that the American Alumni Council has a rather comprehensive list of Educational Fund Raising Manuals, and Number 21, dated March 1965 is devoted to the subject The Annual Fund

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& The Capital Fund Campaign. In this particular pamphlet, the table of contents suggests the reason I first used the word "challenging" to describe "The Annual Fund."

There is, for example, a discussion of "Evaluating an Annual Fund," asking whether or not an Annual Fund should be continued during a Capital Fund Campaign? In one respect, this is a moot question, because the Annual Fund is a Capital Fund Campaign. This isn't my opinion alone, for another section of the same Manual is devoted to the subject "Patterns of Relationship Between Annual Funds and Capital Campaigns." We used to believe it was wise to discontinue an alumni fund appeal when a capital fund was in progress, but we now think it wise to continue both.

The reason, then, that the Annual Fund is an extraordinary challenge is the trend to continue these programs in spite of other fund-raising programs that may be in progress. Any experienced fund raiser knows that this kind of multiple fund-raising activity calls for the

keenest finesse, a subtle capacity to gain your own ends while appearing to cooperate with others, and, in the end, the answer to prayer.

Secondly, I suggested that the Annual Fund is "all-embracing." We all know that the so-called "annual funds" were originally, and until recent years, meant to be and sponsored as annual alumni appeals. During the 'thirties colleges and universities, in general, came awake to alumni potentialities, and by the time we entered World War II, a decade had been spent in organizing collegiate staffs and programs that were directed to alumni fund raising. Most of the programs involved some plan of dues-payment, but there gradually developed the idea of asking for a free-will gift, sponsored within the framework and stimulated by the environments of church related colleges. Basically, however, the alumni appeal was an annual request for help to keep the "association" going, and now and then, a project was included. That is not the concept today! The Annual Fund is an all-institutional effort to gain financial support. It is no longer the exclusive effort of the alumni office,

but of the institution's development office, and goals and procedures, if not identical in form, are at least the same in their intensity as are those in any capital fund campaign.

Why, then, is an Annual Fund "all-embracing?" Well, today, the alumni are still the prime public to which the annual appeal is directed, but these appeals are now also directed to parents, corporations, purveyors, business interests of all types, friends, and foundations. In some annual funds, grants for special projects under one title or another from some state or federal source are considered valid objectives. This certainly is an all-embracing prospect list.

Then, I said that annual funds had become pervasive. I have already indicated how all-embracing the prospect files are, but by "pervasive" I refer to the objects of annual funds. First, they now are hoped to be standardized means of supplying an "X" amount or percentage of the annual budget of the institution. Second, the annual fund objectives are closely tied to the more comprehensive, long-range programs

of an institution. Thus the process of planning for the Annual Fund is, actually, planning the play-by-play strategy of a full-blown development program. In this respect the objectives of the annual appeal pervades the philanthropic needs of the institutions on all levels, and when such objectives are created, the processes of fund raising that follow will be as comprehensive.

Finally, I suggested that the Annual Fund, as an activity, was the "most exhausting" kind of fund raising in which a person could be engaged. The reason for this is the simple process of repetition that permeates the whole concept, obviously, as indicated in the name.

An annual appeal is unending. . . plans must be laid for the coming year before the current year's achievements can be appraised. This involves planning on a scale that is new in most institutions and expensive in all cases. It means that personnel must be available to manage the offices in which the various categories of prospects are listed, changes made, and records kept. Most annual appeals, especially

in smaller institutions, will fail or falter seriously at the point of allocating money for enough personnel to do the task. It is our observation, as so-called "professional consultants," that it takes as large a force of experienced personnel to conduct an annual fund as it does to conduct a capital fund campaign. The difference, of course, is that the institution must accustom itself to the idea that these expenses are permanent. It is the old saw of spending money to get money. Any plan of fund raising that is unending, repetitive, and continuous calls for a flow of ideas in addition to the routine processes that keep an enormous file of people and prospects alive.

When, therefore, you ask me to suggest how to implement your particular annual fund with suggestions for improvement I must first ask the degree to which your particular fund has come to represent all of the characteristics, involvements, and dimensions I have been describing. These observations should be of assistance to some of you.

1. Do you still have an annual alumni appeal that is unrelated

to the main thrust of your institutional fund-raising program? If so, the results probably represent lack of institutional planning. Your annual fund ought to be a definite part of your school's public relations and development policies.

2. Do you have two annual funds, one for the alumni and one for the institution? If so, one checks off the other. It would, then, appear to be wise to merge the alumni program with the institutions, let the alumni office personnel assist the institution in one main annual thrust, and from the proceeds don't forget to finance the Alumni Association.

3. Do you have a development office? Has the annual fund become the responsibility of the Director of Development, whose task is to coordinate the annual fund with other fund raising and development programs? If you have a development office and that office does not control, through planning and execution, the annual fund, both are doomed to mediocrity that comes from lack of integration.

4. Has your alumni program matured to the point where it is looked upon as a concept of continuing education? How are the various professional and business groups in your community and in your publics brought into a working relationship with your institution? The enormous change that has come about in alumni relations is the realization that sentiment is not a sufficiently strong base upon which to launch any knowledge revolution or, for that matter, construct a program of good constituency relationships.

5. To organize and equip an office, that is expected to produce profits of anywhere from 75 to 90 per cent, costs money that is a justifiable expense. How to modernize a development office, particularly with the view in mind of strengthening the annual fund, is a matter of planning on which much money can be spent without gaining the management controls you seek. I know of no single area of continuing fund raising in higher

education where a consultant is more justifiable, or where, for his fees, he can so quickly bring results. Frankly, why shouldn't that be the case when a reasonably intelligent staff does nothing else than work with these problems in institutions all over the country.

As in everything else, the old alumni fund has undergone a revolution that would shock the boys who worked in those fields in the 'twenties and 'thirties. The alumni funds have become institutional fund-raising campaigns, comprehensive in nature, unending, geared to development plans and objectives, projected to all of an institution's publics, staffed by personnel who understand records, automation, graphic arts, publications, and publicity. The Annual Fund is an instrument for institutional advance. Gradually and almost imperceptably the Annual Fund has become a full-blown, complete, unending, institutional program. There is only one thing that might interrupt its ceaseless motion -- and that is whether or not, as a director of an annual fund, you manage

to get a vacation. But, that's another subject, and we won't get into it this morning.

The secret of successful fund raising is work, work, and more work. If you can add some money to that work, and to the money add some talent, you have the ingredients for fund raising. All institutional fund raising has become, in one form or another, some kind of an annual fund. At the moment we are inclined to feel we must have annual objectives, annual organization, annual campaign plans, and annual reports. All of this becomes quite a program when we realize that some 2,000 institutions of higher education are packing their gear and heading for the "gold" in those hills. Under any circumstance we are, I believe, in a period of transition, a transition between the old alumni fund and the old capital fund campaign. We used to say that you can't follow one capital fund campaign with another without an interval of at least eleven years. Then it was changed to seven. Then it was changed to three. Now, it simply doesn't stop.

I've thought about this problem for thirty years now -- and I still send a modest check to my alma mater when the annual call is made. Maybe, what we ought to do is refuse to let a student register unless he gives the Director of Admissions a substantial pledge payable over 40 or 50 years. If that plan worked we would solve a lot of problems; but, if it didn't, well, I suppose we would have another riot!

Riots or not, the Annual Fund is here to stay simply because the need for funds is so great and so serious in our colleges and universities. We must educate our alumni and friends to give more, and we must, as institutions deserving such support, constantly have more to give. Between the two, more annual funds will succeed.

Much of that which has been said thus far deals with philosophical and policy aspects of implementing Annual Giving. So, for a space of time, let's become quite pragmatic and deal with the day-to-day dynamics of implementing the Annual Fund. To be helpful in a maximum way, may I quote selectively from a presentation it was my privilege to give,

just ninety days ago, at the East-West Conference on Philanthropy sponsored by our professional organization, the American Association of Fund-Raising Counsel.

Backing up the excerpts used to document specific points, you will receive a copy of the manuscript prepared for this workshop and a copy of the May 8, AAFRC manuscript entitled, "Annual Campaigns -- Bigger Needs - Better Ways." I presume that makes Wednesday, August 7, 1968 "bargain day" for we are getting it under way with the distribution of two speeches rather than one.

(Note: For the presentation made at this point, refer to the text entitled, "Annual Campaigns -- Bigger Needs - Better Ways.")

Conclusion

One of the very special rewards of growing older is the ability to remember incidents and stories of long ago with great clarity. The relish with which I relate this tale should pinpoint my age.

A family in my childhood neighborhood had five sons of whom the Father was particularly proud. This being the case, he missed few opportunities to let all of us know just "how smart" those young men really were. To emphasize their razor-sharpness on one occasion, the Father said, "You know, those boys of mine never waste a minute. Why, on a rainy day they go out to the barn and trade among themselves and each one makes ten or fifteen dollars!"

In the thirty minutes of discussion just ahead we will be trading among ourselves. If we are as sharp as those five sons -- considering the inflation of our times -- each one of us should gain ideas worth forty or fifty dollars!

Presented at 13th Annual Summer Workshop of Council for the Advancement of Small Colleges, College of Santa Fe, Santa Fe, New Mexico, August 5-8, 1968.